

Message Text

PAGE 01 NATO 00933 181917Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W
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O R 181810Z FEB 77
FM USMISSION NATO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1803
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON

CONFIDENTIAL USNATO 0933

EXDIS

DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS TO DEFENSE FOR SECRETARY BROWN FROM
AMBASSADOR STRAUSZ-HUPE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: NATO OCON MILI AWACS
SUBJ: NATO AEW

REF: USNATO 0932 (DTG 181805Z FEB 77)

1. I SENSE THAT WE ARE REACHING A CRITICAL POINT IN THIS HIGH-STAKES POKER GAME. KEY FIGURES IN THE FRG AND UK SUPPORT NATO AEW. THEY FACE, HOWEVER, STRONG OPPOSITION FROM MANY QUARTERS: IN THE UK IT IS LABOR AND INDUSTRY; IN THE FRG THE OPPONENTS SEEM LARGE IN THE MILITARY AND AMONG THE BUDGETEERS. MULLEY HAS SAID HE IS RUNNING OUT OF TIME. I BELIEVE HIM. LEBER SAYS THAT THE RELATIVE US-FRG COST SHARE COMPUTED AT 29 AND 27 PERCENT, RESPECTIVELY, PUTS SO LARGE A BURDEN ON THE FRG THAT HE MIGHT NOT BE ABLE TO CARRY THE BUNDESTAG. I BELIEVE HIM, TOO.

2. I DO NOT KNOW HOW MUCH FINANCIAL FLEXIBILITY YOU HAVE, OR HOW MUCH YOU WANT TO SHOW AT THIS POINT IN THE GAME. MOREOVER, I DO NOT KNOW WHAT OTHER ELEMENTS IN THE US-
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FRG RELATIONSHIP ARE ENTWINED WITH AEW. BUT TWO THINGS ARE CLEAR TO ME: WE ARE RUNNING OUT OF TIME AND WE DO NOT NOW SEEM TO HAVE HOOKED THE FRG. THEREFORE, I SUGGEST THAT WE BEAR IN MIND THAT THERE ARE TWO THINGS WE CAN DO AT ANY TIME TO STRENGTHEN THE HANDS OF AEW SUPPORTERS IN BONN AND LONDON:

--YOU CAN STATE DIRECTLY IN ALLIED CAPITALS ON THE HIGHEST LEVEL THAT THE US FULLY SUPPORTS AEW;

--YOU CAN TELL THE FRG THE US IS PREPARED TO BE MORE
FLEXIBLE ON COST SHARES.

IF THE GERMANS STILL REFUSE TO BUDGE IN THE FACE OF THIS
DEMONSTRATION OF US READINESS TO MOVE AHEAD, THEN WE
MAY HAVE TO, IN MULLEY'S WORDS, "PACK IT IN."

3. GREAT AS MIGHT BE THE BENEFITS TO NATO OF THIS UNDER-TAKING, GREATER YET WILL BE THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS ON THE ALLIANCE THAT WOULD DERIVE FROM FAILURE. IT IS FOR THIS REASON -- QUITE APART FROM THE SUBSTANTIVE NEED FOR AEW --THAT I HAVE GIVEN IT MY CONTINUING AND CLOSE ATTENTION.
STRAUSZ-HUPE

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